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Influence of Fuel Subsidy Removal on Business Educators' Job Satisfaction in South-West Colleges of Education, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study was carried out to investigate the influence of fuel subsidy removal on business educators' job satisfaction in South-west Colleges of Education in Nigeria. The survey research type was adopted for the study. The study comprises two research objectives and two research questions. Two research hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The population of the study comprises 219 Business Education lecturers in the twelve Colleges of Education offering Business Education in South-west, Nigeria. The instrument used for data collection was questionnaire titled "Fuel Subsidy Removal on Business Educators' Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (FSRBEJSQ)." The instrument was validated by experts and the reliability of the instrument was tested and statistically analysed using the Cronbach Alpha reliability coefficient estimates, which ranged from 0.86 to 0.94. Descriptive statistics were used to answer research questions, and research hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA). The results of the findings revealed that provision of palliatives and ensuring fair payment and rewards during fuel subsidy removal era influence business educators' job satisfaction among others. It was concluded that provision of palliatives to business educators, fair payment and rewards during fuel subsidy removal era enhance their job satisfaction among others.

Keywords: Fuel subsidy, Palliatives, Business Educators, Job satisfaction and Rewards

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Introduction

Many nations of the world engage in different principles and policies that will make life better for her citizens. Though some of these policies may not be the best for the nation due to the effect such may be having on the economy. In such situation, a lot of money may be budgeted, allocated and spent on such policies in order to make life better for the citizens. In Nigeria, fuel subsidy policy is one of the many policies of the government in other to make life better for the people.

Fuel subsidies are series of government actions designed to lower the cost of gasoline or petroleum that the public consumes by directly interacting with oil firms and so subsidizing the commodity. The Latin word "subsidium" (sub-near + sedēre to sit) indicates reserve troops, support, or aid; hence the acronym SUB-SIT. Therefore, subsidies can be viewed as a government financial aid award intended to keep the cost of a specific good at a given, manageable level. Selling a product below its cost of production is known as subsidising; selling gasoline below its cost of importation is known as a fuel subsidy (Yunusaet al., 2023). In order to lessen the impact of rising global oil prices on Nigerians, the government often supplied fuel to the country's citizens at below-cost prices. Fuel subsidies were formalised with the Price Control Act of 1977, which made it illegal for marketers working for oil firms and other businesses to sell specific goods-including gasoline-for more than the allowed price (Garba, 2023). The military government of Olusegun Obasanjo implemented this regulation in an effort to lessen the effects of the global large inflation phase of the 1970s, which was caused by a global rise in energy prices. However, the idea of fuel subsidies in Nigeria has been beset by grave claims of resource mismanagement and corruption (Yunusa, et al. 2023).

It was observed that during President Muhammadu Buhari's regime, the Nigerian government spent a staggering amount of money on fuel subsidies. The Civic-Tech Organisation Budget shows that in 2015, N316 billion was spent on subsidies. The amount dropped to N99 billion in 2016 and N141.6 billion in 2017. By 2018, petrol subsidies had cost a staggering N722 billion. In 2019 and 2020, the government spent N578 billion and N134 billion, respectively. In 2021 and 2022, the federal government set aside N1.42 trillion and N4.3 trillion, respectively, for fuel subsidies. N3.6 trillion was set aside by the Nigerian government for fuel subsidies during the fiscal year 2023, which ends in June. With each month, amounting to N600 billion. The previous administration allocated 3.36 trillion naira ($7.3 billion) for the subsidies through the middle of 2023, according to its Finance Minister (Garba, 2023).

A major change in economic and social policy, the elimination of gasoline subsidies in Nigeria has had a dramatic impact on a number of areas, including education sector. This study looks at how the policy change affects business instructors' job commitment and satisfaction, as they are group that is especially impacted by these economic changes. Fuel prices immediately increased across the country after the Nigerian government, led by President Bola Ahmed Tinubu, formally put an end to the long-running fuel subsidy scheme in May 2023. The goal of this programme was to redirect money that is being spent on subsidies to projects like infrastructure, healthcare and education that would promote improved sustainable economic development. However, because of the suddenness of this shift, many Nigerians are experiencing financial difficulty, which has increased poverty level and raised living expenses. Unfortunately, the national oil company, Nigerian National Petroleum Corporation (NNPC), raised the pump price of fuel from N189 per liter to between N480 and N570 per liter, a more than 200 percent increase after it was announced that the oil subsidy would be phased out, while there is a provision in the budget to subsidise fuel until the end of June 2023 by Municipal Property Rates Act (Amnesty International, 2021).

According to Kabri (2023), the Nigerian government lacks the resources necessary to carry out the payment of fuel subsidy. Presently, the country cannot afford to pay for fuel subsidy, and the Nigerian government owes NNPC N2.8 trillion as unpaid subsidy payments. Bola (2023) and Kabri (2023) concurred that the gasoline subsidy must be abolished because of its effects on the Nigerian government and society as a whole. In addition, he asserted that during the period under consideration, the federal government spent more on fuel subsidy than on infrastructure development, health care and education, and that Bola Tinubu's administration should continue to implement his plan to do away with the fuel subsidy. He proved that there would be major benefits to doing away with the fuel subsidy and using the savings for subsidise public transit, road construction, social welfare, healthcare, education and agriculture.

Professionals that teach courses pertaining to business disciplines are known as business educators. They are responsible for imparting on students the information and abilities they need to comprehend and succeed in a variety of business domains, which include accounting, finance, marketing, management, entrepreneurship and business law. These educators are employed at various educational levels, including high schools, colleges, universities and vocational schools. Business educators' job satisfaction is the extent to which they are satisfied and contented with their service conditions. An affective or emotional response towards various facets of one's job is one definition of job satisfaction (Judge and Klinger, 2021). This definition captures how employees feel about their jobs, whether they are good or bad, and includes things like compensation, benefits, connections with coworkers and possibilities for growth. The subjective viewpoint of a business educator, which encompasses his feelings regarding his profession and the work of his organisation, is known as job satisfaction. In addition, a pleasant and desirable emotional state that arises from accomplishing work values is another way to characterise job satisfaction. As a result, it becomes a crucial component in relation to co-workers, upper management, workloads, stress levels, employees' work conditions and remuneration (Oates et al., 2022).

The economic climate in which business educators work has been directly impacted by the removal of fuel subsidy. Increase in fuel price has raise housing and transportation expenses, adding to the financial strain on educators who frequently travel great distances for work. Due to lack of salary increase to keep up with the escalating costs of products and services, business educators are experiencing financial stress and a decline in their purchasing power. It is commonly known that job happiness and external economic issues are related, but business instructors are under increased financial strain in the wake of the elimination of gasoline subsidy, which could result in a decline in job commitment and satisfaction. Without sufficient pay changes, employees may get frustrated, less motivated and less dedicated to their jobs as a result of their failure to keep up with growing living expenses. Their general well-being, productivity and ability to provide high-quality instruction are all impacted by this financial hardship.

Objective of the Problem

The issue of gasoline subsidy removal by Nigeria's Federal government has been one of the major concerns of scholars, many stakeholders, and some potential researchers due to its impact on different aspects of the nation's economy. Significant social and economic effects have been felt in various sectors of the economy as a result of the elimination of gasoline subsidy. This reform has a particular impact on business educators, who are part of the workforce presently and also in the future. Workers' earnings (Business educators inclusive) have not increased in line with the dramatic rise in fuel price, which has ultimately increased the standard of living of all workers in the country, thereby making the prices of basic items and everything to be sky-rocket. This economic strain has raised concerns about the job satisfaction of business educators.

Though many maintain that the removal of fuel subsidy is what the nations' economy need presently if the nation will grow, some insist that Nigeria as a nation is not ripe enough to remove such important subsidy due to the effects it's likely to have on the people, while others noted necessary palliative measures need to be put in place to cushion the effect of the subsidy removal This is in line with McCulloch et al. (2021) when they submitted that a large number of Nigerians are against the elimination or reform of fuel subsidy because they think the country's administration is corrupt and incapable of implementing open reforms. These and many more prompted the researchers to carry out a research on the influence of fuel subsidy removal on business educators' job satisfaction, and also to provide a comprehensive analysis of the impact of fuel subsidy removal on the job satisfaction of business educators.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the influence of fuel subsidy removal on business educators' job satisfaction in South-west Colleges of Education in Nigeria. Other specific purposes of the study are:

1. To investigate the influence of palliatives to business educators during the era of fuel subsidy removal on their job satisfaction in South-west Colleges of Education.

2. To find out the influence of business educators fair payments and reward during fuel subsidy removal era on their job satisfaction in South-west Colleges of Education.

Research Questions

Based on the purpose of the study, the following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What is the influence of palliatives during fuel subsidy removal era on business education lecturers' job satisfaction in South-west College of Education, Nigeria?

2. What is the influence of fair payment and rewards during fuel subsidy removal era on business educators' job satisfaction in South-west Colleges of Education?

Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H_{01}: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female lecturers' respondents on the influence of palliatives to business educators during fuel subsidy removal era on their job satisfaction in South-west Colleges of Education.

H_{02}: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female lecturers' respondents on the influence of fair payment and rewards during fuel subsidy removal era on business educators' job satisfaction in South-west Colleges of Education.

Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was quantitative research of descriptive survey type. This design is particularly suited for this study as it allows for the collection of detailed information about the current state of affairs and the relationships between variables. The population of the study comprises all 219 business educators from twelve public colleges of education that teach Business Education in South-west geo-political Zone of Nigeria. The entire population of the study was used as respondents since the population is manageable. This assertion is in line with the position of Nworgu (2016) who stressed that the whole population could be studied if the size of the population is small in order to obtain an accurate response. A well structured questionnaire titled "Fuel Subsidy Removal on Business Educators' Job Satisfaction Questionnaire (FSRBEJSQ) " was developed and used as instrument for data collection. The items of questionnaire generated was divided into two parts. The first part (part one) of the instrument requires personal information of the respondents; while the second part (part two) of the instruments contain 20 item questions divided into two sections: (A & B). Section 'A' covers research question one, which has 10 items. Section 'B' covers research question two, which consists of 10 items. The items were placed on 4 point rating scale and are rated thus: Strongly Agree (SA), Agreed (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The help of the Heads of Department of Business Education in each of the colleges was solicited, for easy and smooth administration of the instrument.

The instrument for data collection was face and content validated by experts and the experts' comments and suggestions were included in the final-draft of the instrument. Cronbach Alpha method was used to determine the reliability coefficient. The reliability coefficient estimates ranged from .86 to .94, which showed that the instrument was consistent in measuring what it was purported to measure. The data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics, descriptive statistics of mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions while research hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

Results

Table 1: Distribution of Business Educators by Gender

		Frequency	**Percent**	**Valid Percent**	**Cumulative Percent**
Valid	Male	127	58.0	58.0	58.0
	Female	92	42.0	42.0	100.0
	Total	219	100.0	100.0	

Table 1 above showed the distribution of business educators that participated in the study by gender. It is shown that out of the 219 (100.0%) business educators used in this study, 127 (58%) were male while 92 (42%) were female staff.

Research Question 1: What is the influence of palliatives during fuel subsidy removal era on Business Education lecturers' job satisfaction in South-west College of Education, Nigeria?

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of RQ 1

S/N	Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	Provision of palliatives during fuel subsidy removal era has improved my job satisfaction.	219	2	4	3.07	.479
2	Provision of adequate palliatives during fuel subsidy removal era enhances my job satisfaction.	219	2	4	3.16	.495
3	Provision of timely incentives during fuel subsidy removal era fostered my job satisfaction.	219	2	5	3.11	.678
4	I feel more motivated to perform my duties due to incentives provided.	219	2	4	2.99	.529
5	The palliatives have reduced the financial burden caused by fuel subsidy removal.	219	1	4	3.31	.594
6	Provision of palliatives has improved my work-life balance and in turn enhances my job satisfaction.	219	2	4	3.08	.481
7	Provision of performance bonuses bonuses enhances my job satisfaction in school.	219	2	4	3.08	.505
8	Provision of palliatives increases my loyalties to the institution which resulted to increase job satisfaction.	219	2	4	3.23	.587
9	The institution's efforts to provide palliatives show a commitment to staffs' welfare and thus increase my job satisfaction.	219	2	4	3.15	.633
10	Provision of accommodation allowance promotes my job satisfaction.	219	2	4	3.24	.480
	Valid N (listwise)	219				

Table 2 above reveal the influence of palliatives during fuel subsidy removal era on business education lecturers' job satisfaction in South-west Colleges of Education, Nigeria, where the table 5 above illustrated that statements one, two, three, four five, six, seven, eight, nine and ten are having the means and standard deviation of 3.07 (.479), 3.16 (.495), 3.11 (.678), 2.99 (.529), 3.31 (.594), 3.08 (.481), 3.08 (.505), 3.23 (.587), 3.15 (.633) and 3.24 (.480) respectively.

However, it is evident that the influence of palliatives during fuel subsidy removal era on business education lecturers' job satisfaction in South-west Colleges of Education, Nigeria cannot be over-emphasised. This indicates that provision of palliatives to business educators in South-west Nigeria Colleges of Education enhance their job satisfaction during fuel subsidy removal era.

Research Question 2: What is the influence of business educators' fair payment and rewards during fuel subsidy removal era on their job satisfaction in South-west Colleges of Education?

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of RQ 2

S/N	Items	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
1	My job has become more stressful and tiring due to static nature of my salary.	219	2	4	3.24	.543
2	I am highly satisfied with the current salary structure provided by the institution during fuel subsidy removal era.	219	1	5	3.18	.623
3	I am always satisfied with the recognition I receive for any contribution to the school.	219	2	5	3.10	.546
4	The extent of available benefits (health insurance, retirement plans) influences my job satisfaction in school.	219	1	5	3.07	.635
5	The extents of non-monetary rewards (recognition, professional development opportunities) influence my job satisfaction.	219	1	5	3.13	.640
6	I am please with the institution's policies on compensation and benefits during fuel subsidy removal era.	219	2	5	3.11	.603
7	There are opportunities for career advancement and promotion provided by the school prone to fuel subsidy.	219	1	4	3.02	.609
8	Fair payment and rewards greatly influence my overall job satisfaction during fuel subsidy elimination era.	219	2	4	3.09	.580
9	Fairness of workload distribution among colleagues could enhance my job satisfaction in school.	219	2	5	3.15	.572

10	Performance-based rewards impact my job satisfaction level in the school.	219	2	4	3.16	.525
	Valid N (listwise)	219				

The table 3 above reveal the influence of business educators' fair payment and rewards during fuel subsidy removal era on their job satisfaction in South-west Colleges of Education, where the table 6 above illustrated that statements eleven, twelve, thirteen, fourteen fifteen, sixteen, seventeen, eighteen, nineteen and twenty are having the means and standard deviation of 3.24 (.543), 3.18 (.623), 3.10 (.546), 3.07 (.635), 3.13 (.640), 3.11 (.603), 3.02 (.609), 3.09 (.580), 3.15 (.572) and 3.16 (.525) respectively.

However, it is evident that the influence of fair payment and rewards during fuel subsidy removal era on business education lecturers' job satisfaction in South-west Colleges of Education, Nigeria cannot be under-estimated. This indicates that fair payment and rewards to business educators in South-west Nigeria Colleges of Education foster their job satisfaction during fuel subsidy removal era.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis One: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female lecturers' respondents on the influence of palliatives to business educators during fuel subsidy removal era on their job satisfaction in South-west Colleges of Education.

Table 4: One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the influence of palliatives to business educators during fuel subsidy removal era on their job satisfaction in South- west Colleges of Education.

	Sum of Squares	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Between Groups	.016	1	.016	.363	.547
Within Groups	9.797	217	.045		
Total	9.814	218			

Significant df = 1(217), F-value = .363

Table 4 showed that the calculated significance value (.547) of F (.363) is greater than 0.05 alpha level (.547 > 0.05). Consequently, the null hypothesis was accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female lecturers' respondents on the influence of palliatives to business educators during fuel subsidy removal era on their job satisfaction in South-west Colleges of Education.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female lecturers' respondents on the influence of fair payment and rewards during fuel subsidy removal era on business educators' job satisfaction in South-west colleges of education.

Table 5: One-Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) on the influence of fair payment and rewards during fuel subsidy removal era on business educators' job satisfaction in South-west Colleges of Education.

	Sum of Squares	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig.**
Between Groups	.018	1	.018	.328	.567
Within Groups	12.134	217	.056		
Total	12.152	218			

Significant; df = 1(217), F-value = .328

Table 5 showed that Table 9 showed that the calculated significance value (.547) of F (.328) is greater than 0.05 alpha level (.547 > 0.05). Hence, the null hypothesis is hereby accepted. This implies that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female lecturers' respondents on the influence of fair payment and rewards during fuel subsidy removal era on business educators' job satisfaction in South-west Colleges of Education.

Discussion

The study revealed that there is there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female lecturers' respondents on the influence of palliatives to business educators during fuel subsidy removal era on their job satisfaction in South-west Colleges of Education, Nigeria. The hypothesis was accepted which indicates that both male and female lecturers of South-west Colleges of Education agreed that if palliatives were provided, their job satisfaction would be enhanced accordingly. This is in line with the findings of Ogunyemi (2022)**,** who studied the effects of government palliative measures on teachers' job satisfaction during economic crises, highlighting that palliatives can bridge gaps in job satisfaction but may not completely remove gender disparities. Also, corroborated with the study of Akinola (2023)**,** who stressed the role of temporary relief measures like palliatives and incentives in educational institutions during economic downturns and their effects on educators' morale as well as their level of job satisfaction.

The findings also revealed that the second null hypothesis which postulated that there is no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female lecturers' respondents on the influence of fair payment and rewards during fuel subsidy removal era on business educators' job satisfaction in South-west Colleges of Education was accepted. This is because the calculated significance value (.547) of F (.328) is greater than 0.05 level of significance (.547 > 0.05), therefore the null hypothesis was accepted. This therefore implies that both male and female South-west Colleges of Education lecturers anonymously agreed on the fact that fair payment and rewards system during fuel subsidy removal era will foster their job satisfaction. This is in line with the findings of Daramola (2023), who examined the effects of fuel subsidy removal on educators' job satisfaction, indicating that the perception of fair payment became more important during economic changes, affecting both male and female educators in the same manner. On the same vein, Fashola (2024) also explained the implications of economic policies on job satisfaction in the education sector, finding that there is no significant difference in how male and female educators rated their satisfaction concerning compensation during the subsidy removal era. Also, Adetunji and Nwankwo (2024) explained the relationship between reward systems and job satisfaction in Nigerian colleges, reporting that there is no significant gender difference in how rewards and compensation impacted job satisfaction levels among Nigerian college lecturers.

Conclusion

This paper assessed the influence of fuel subsidy removal on business educators' job satisfaction in south-west colleges of education, Nigeria. It was revealed that provision of palliatives to business educators in South-west Colleges of Education during fuel subsidy removal era enhance their job satisfaction. Also, there was no significant difference in the mean rating of male and female respondents on the impact of palliatives to business educators in South-west Colleges of Education on their job satisfaction.

Based on the findings of the study, we can therefore conclude that both male and female South-west Colleges of Education lecturers anonymously agreed on the fact that fair payment and rewards system during fuel subsidy removal era will foster their job satisfaction.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

1. Business educators should voice out their concerns using real and verifiable data and evidences to educational institutions, policymakers and government officials as regards their specific needs and aspirations in terms of salary adjustment, provision of allowances and/or palliatives and other financial incentives that will foster their job satisfaction and commitment.

2. Business educators should prepare for likely future economic changes and other macro-economic policies like fuel subsidy removal in terms of how these changes can affect their personal lives and professional development as well as their job satisfaction and commitment.

3. School administrators should come up with some policies and measures that will improve lecturers' welfare. These measures may include among others; financial support programme, professional development opportunities and increased working conditions as these will likely bring a dramatic improvement in business educators' job satisfaction and commitment.

4. Government should evaluate the effectiveness of fuel subsidy removal and make required arrangements to curb its adverse effects on the public which business educators are included.

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